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BRIEFING NOTE TO COLONEL L. K. WHITE

SUBJECT: Vulnerability of CIA Authorities

1. In line with our recent talks, I suggest some thoughts you might want to present to the Director.

2. The unusual grant of power, particularly over funds, that has been given by the Congress to CIA make it highly vulnerable to criticism by the more orthodox branches of Government. That such criticism frequently occurs has been reported to us by friendly outside sources. By and large, it results from a lack of understanding of our mission and problems. To that extent, it is undeserved.

3. The counterpart lies in the fact that we must take every precaution to eliminate the possibility of deserved criticism. We must exercise our unusual authorities only when necessary to proper performance of our functions, and not merely for the sake of convenience to provide for individual hardships or for purposes which we may have reason to want, but in connection with which we are in no different position from that of other Government entities.

4. This thought is frequently the basis of rulings from this office, which are occasionally resented unless we have a chance to explain that our fundamental approach is based on the fact that it is more important that we continue to possess in the future our unusual authorities for proper intelligence use than to abuse those authorities by improper use with the resulting possibility of Congressional rescission of all or part of the powers granted us.

5. We could elaborate on this indefinitely, but believe that the foregoing contains the important thoughts.

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General Counsel

OGC/LRH:aia

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